

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. ANGOLAN DEVELOPMENTS

A. NIGERIA: FORD LETTER DRAWS HEAVY FIRE

RECOMMENDING THAT THE NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY OF US DISPLEASURE AT THE FMG'S RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER ON ANGOLA, EMBASSY LAGOS ADDS:

--THE NIGERIANS APPARENTLY WISH TO PROJECT A FORCEFUL IMAGE ON THE EVE OF OAU DISCUSSIONS.

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--THEY SEEM TO BELIEVE THE US WAS TRYING TO UNDERMINE

NIGERIA'S POSITION ON ITS OWN TURF.

--THE FMG IS DECIDEDLY UNEASY ABOUT HAVING STAKED SO MUCH ON ALL-OUT SUPPORT FOR THE MPLA.

THE EMBASSY PREDICTS THE NIGERIAN STATEMENT WILL ALIENATE AS MANY AFRICAN LEADERS AS IT EXCITES.

B. IZVESTIYA TAKES A STEP BACK

EMBASSY MOSCOW THINKS THAT THE JANUARY 6 IZVESTIYA EDITORIAL READS LIKE A PARTIAL CORRECTIVE TO SPECULATION PROVOKED BY THE PRAVDA PIECE OF THE THIRD. THE EMBASSY NOTES THAT WHILE NEITHER COALITION NOR CESSATION OF SOVIET/CUBAN INTERVENTION IS EXCLUDED, THE PIECE OFFERS ABSOLUTELY NO ENCOURAGEMENT IN EITHER AREA, AND BY IMPLICATION AT LEAST POINTS RIGIDLY TOWARD THE STATUS QUO IN BOTH CASES.

C. TSHOMBE ASKS FOR AID

THE EXILED SON OF FORMER PRESIDENT OF KATANGA MOISE TSHOMBE WALKED INTO EMBASSY BRUSSELS ON JANUARY 5 AND REQUESTED US FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR 4,000 EX-KATANGAN GENDARMES WHO ARE CURRENTLY FIGHTING WITH THE MPLA. JEAN TSHOMBE CLAIMS TO HAVE ASSERTED HIS "PERSONAL AUTHORITY" OVER THE GENDARMES AND SAYS THEY WILL SWITCH SIDES IF ASSURED THEY LATER CAN RETURN TO ZAIRE WITH A US "GUARANTEE" AGAINST MASSACRES OR OTHER RETALIATION. THE EMBASSY SAYS IT GAVE HIM NO REASON TO BELIEVE US AID WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

D. CHAD DOES AN ABOUT-FACE

DESPITE ASSURANCES TO THE CONTRARY GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR LITTLE BY FOREIGN MINISTER KAMOUGNE THE PRECEDING DAY, THE GOC ANNOUNCED ON JANUARY 7 THAT IT WILL SUPPORT THE MPLA AND URGE THE OAU TO DO THE SAME. (SECRET) LAGOS 207; (CONFIDENTIAL) MOSCOW 168, BRUSSELS 136 AND NDJAMENA 63, 1/7.)

2. LEBANON: SIEGE RAISES SPECTER OF ECONOMIC WARFARE
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EMBASSY BEIRUT REPORTS THAT THE CONTINUING PHALANGIST SIEGE OF THE TEL ZAATAR REFUGEE CAMP RAISES THE PROSPECT OF ECONOMIC WARFARE BETWEEN THE CONTENDING MOSLEM AND CHRISTIAN FACTIONS:

--THE PALESTINIANS, IN RESPONSE, HAVE THREATENED TO CUT OFF FOOD SUPPLIES TO THE CHRISTIAN ASHRAFIYEH

QUARTER.

--BOTH SIDES HAVE ALLEGED THAT AN ENCIRCLING MOVEMENT IS UNDERWAY EAST OF BEIRUT.

--LEFTISTS AND PALESTINIANS CLAIM THE SIEGE IS PART OF A PHALANGIST PLAN TO DRAG THE FEDAYEEN INTO THE CONFLICT AND FORCE THE RELOCATION OF THE REFUGEE CAMPS.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS HAVE FURTHER COMPLICATED THE SECURITY PICTURE:

--THE HIGHER COORDINATION COMMITTEE HAS SUSPENDED ACTIVITIES INDEFINITELY DESPITE PREMIER KARAME'S CALL FOR THE COMMITTEE TO MEET UNDER HIS CHAIRMANSHIP.

--THE CABINET, REPORTEDLY FOR SECURITY REASONS, CANCELLED ITS JANUARY 7 MEETING TO CONSIDER THE SIEGE AND OTHER MATTERS.

EMBASSY COMMENT: DESPITE THREATS OF ECONOMIC WARFARE, THE MUTUAL BENEFITS OF COMMERCIAL EXCHANGE SUGGEST COMMON SENSE LIMITS TO THE DISRUPTION OF THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM. (CONFIDENTIAL) BEIRUT 178 AND 134, 1/7.)

3. ITALY: ANOTHER GOVERNMENT FALLS

FOLLOWING THE JANUARY 7 WITHDRAWAL OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY (PSI) FROM THE COALITION AND THE SUBSEQUENT RESIGNATION OF THE 13-MONTH OLD GOVERNMENT, EMBASSY ROME FINDS THE THREE SCENARIOS THAT APPEAR MOST PLAUSIBLE AT THIS STAGE ARE:

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--A
EMERGENCY GOVERNMENT WITH COMMUNIST SUPPORT TO AVOID THE DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT--LEAST LIKELY SINCE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC) WOULD OPPOSE ANY FORMAL PCI ROLE;

--A DC-PSI ACCORD, WITH THE PSI HAVING TO BREAK WITH THE COMMUNISTS AND THE DC HAVING TO SACRIFICE SOME KEY ECONOMIC POSTS;

--EARLY ELECTIONS, SEEN BY MANY AS THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME IF NO ACCORD IS REACHED WITH THE PSI.

EMBASSY COMMENT: AT PRESENT ALL THE MAJOR PARTIES--AND PRESIDENT LEONE--OPPOSE EARLY ELECTIONS. BUT ELECTIONS,

RATHER THAN A DC-PSI ACCORD, SEEM THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME GIVEN THE NUMEROUS DIFFICULT ISSUES THAT DIVIDE THE PARTIES. (CONFIDENTIAL) ROME 208 AND (UNCLASSIFIED) ROME 176, 1/7.)

4. CABINET POST FOR ABBA EBAN?

EMBASSY TEL AVIV OBSERVES THAT BOTH RABIN AND EBAN ARE REFUSING TO COMMENT ON PRESS REPORTS THAT EBAN MAY BE OFFERED A CABINET POST--PERHAPS THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SLOT CURRENTLY FILLED BY ALLON. LEADERS OF THE LABOR PARTY'S MAPAI FACTION ARGUE THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD PLEASE THE

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY, BUT THE EMBASSY THINKS DOMESTIC POLITICS MILITATE AGAINST THE EBAN APPOINTMENT. IT WOULD INEVITABLY COME AT ALLON'S EXPENSE, AND THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT RABIN WANTS TO DOWNGRADE HIM FURTHER OR SPARK A CONFRONTATION. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) TEL AVIV 168, 1/7.)

5. COD WAR: THE GOI MAY BE RAMMED INTO ACTION

JUSTICE MINISTER JOHANNESSON HAS ASKED AMBASSADOR IRVING FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE "COD WAR" AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR US-ICELAND DEFENSE RELATIONS SHOULD ICELAND WITHDRAW FROM NATO. MEANWHILE, WITH THE DISPUTE FURTHER EXACERBATED BY ANOTHER RAMMING INCIDENT, AMBASSADOR IRVING
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ESTIMATES THAT A BREAK IN RELATIONS MAY NOT BE FAR OFF, AS THE GOI IS COMING UNDER INCREASINGLY INTENSE PRESSURE TO ACT. (CONFIDENTIAL) REYKJAVIK 29 AND (UNCLASSIFIED) REYKJAVIK 25, 1/7.)

6. ALGERIANS REJECT AUSTRIAN EXTRADITION REQUEST

EMBARRASSED OVER ITS HANDLING OF THE OPEC KIDNAPPINGS, THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT FORMALLY ASKED THE ALGERIANS TO EXTRADITE THE TERRORISTS. IN RESPONSE TO AN INFORMAL REQUEST, THE ALGERIANS POINTED TO THE ABSENCE OF AN EXTRADITION TREATY, AND ARGUED THAT THEY, LIKE THE AUSTRIANS, HAD RELEASED THE TERRORISTS IN THE INTEREST OF SAVING LIVES, AND THEREFORE WOULD NOT DO THE AUSTRIANS' WORK BY RETURNING THEM. (CONFIDENTIAL) ALGIERS 38, 1/7.) KISSINGER

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